

Class size

Class size is a measure of the average number of students a teacher sees during a class period or school day. Smaller class sizes are valued because they may allow students to receive more individual attention from their teachers and may reduce teachers' burden of managing large numbers of students and their work. However, smaller class sizes are more expensive. Also, large classes may not necessarily hinder instruction, depending on teaching style, student behavior, and frequency of outside class meetings.

- In the 1993–94 school year, public school teachers' average class size was larger than that of their private school counterparts at both the elementary and secondary levels (24 versus 22 students and 24 versus 19 students, respectively).
- The average class size of public elementary and secondary teachers was similar in the 1987–88 and 1993–94 school years.
- The average class size of public school teachers was similar across all levels of school poverty. However, at the secondary level, teachers from public schools with a high minority enrollment (20 percent or more) had slightly larger average class sizes than public teachers from schools with a low minority enrollment (less than 20 percent) (24 versus 23 students, respectively).
- Public school teachers from large schools (750 or more students) had larger average class sizes than those teachers from small schools (less than 150 students) at both the elementary and secondary levels (26 versus 18 students and 25 versus 15 students, respectively).

Teachers' average class size, by control of school and teacher level: School years 1987–88, 1990–91, and 1993–94

Control of school and teacher level	1987–88	1990–91	1993–94
Public			
Elementary	24.5	24.1	24.1
Secondary	23.9	22.6	23.6
Private			
Elementary	21.3	20.5	21.7
Secondary	20.4	19.1	19.1

Teachers' average class size, by control of school, teacher level, and selected school characteristics: School year 1993–94

Selected school characteristics	Public		Private	
	Elementary	Secondary	Elementary	Secondary
Total	24.1	23.6	21.7	19.1
Urbanicity				
Central city	24.7	25.0	22.2	19.9
Urban fringe/large town	25.1	24.5	21.9	19.8
Rural/small town	22.9	22.1	20.4	15.6
Percentage of minority students enrolled				
Less than 20 percent	23.6	22.8	20.9	18.8
20 percent or more	24.5	24.3	22.6	19.9
Percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch				
0–5	24.2	23.7	—	—
6–20	24.5	23.5	—	—
21–40	24.1	23.5	—	—
41 or more	23.8	23.6	—	—
School size				
Less than 150	18.1	15.2	17.0	10.7
150–499	23.0	20.7	23.1	18.7
500–749	24.9	23.4	25.1	21.1
750 or more	26.1	24.9	23.3	22.6

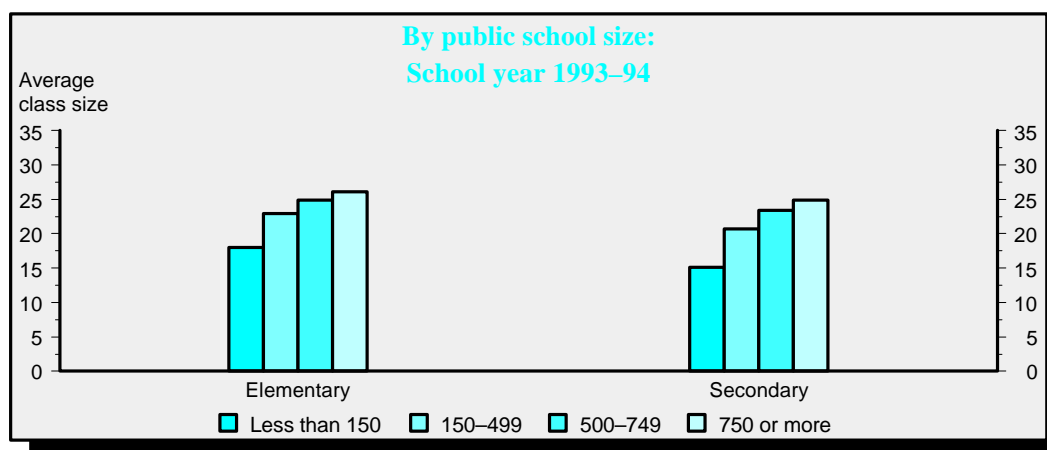
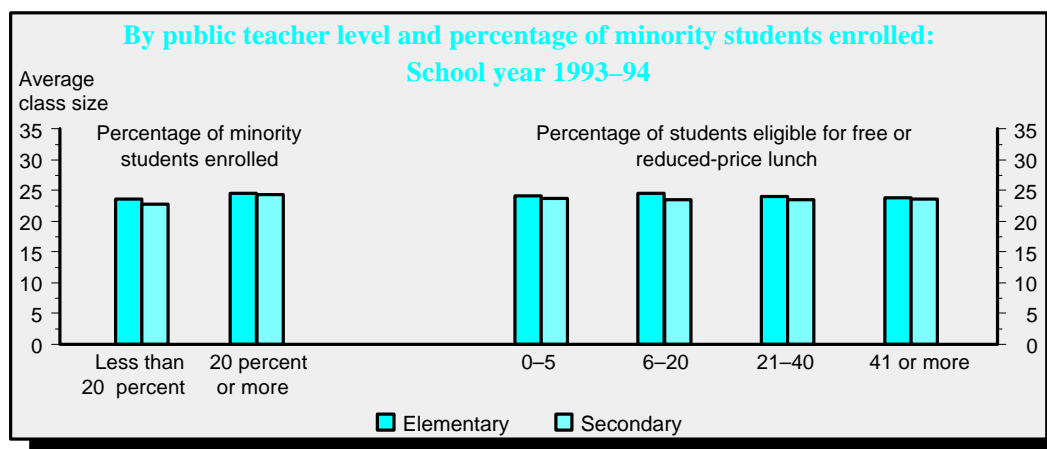
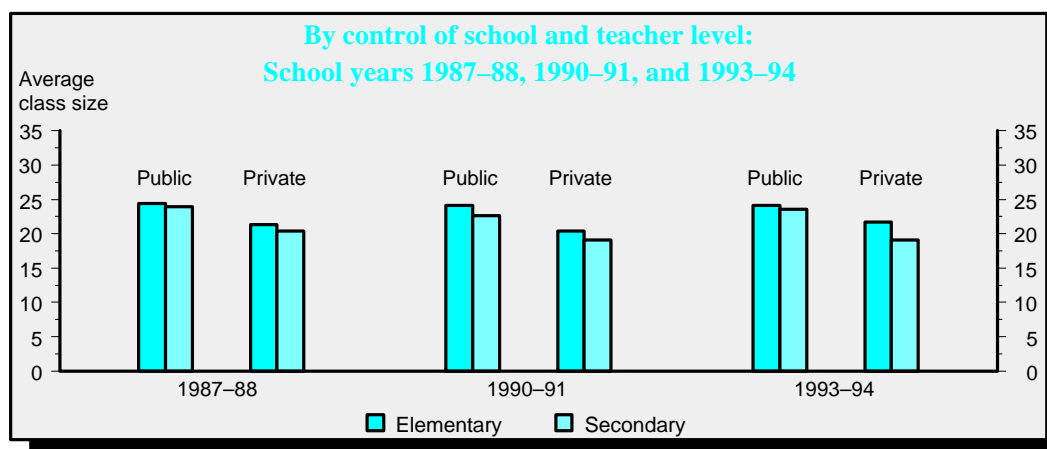
— Not applicable.

NOTE: In this analysis, "elementary" teachers are those who taught self-contained classes at the elementary level, and "secondary" teachers are those who taught departmentalized classes (e.g., science, art, social science, or other course subjects) at the secondary level. Excludes special

education teachers. Teachers were classified as elementary or secondary on the basis of the grades they taught, rather than on the level of the school in which they taught.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1987–88, 1990–91, and 1993–94.

Teachers' average class size



NOTE: In this analysis, "elementary" teachers are those who taught self-contained classes at the elementary level, and "secondary" teachers are those who taught departmentalized classes (e.g., science, art, social science, or other course subjects) at the secondary level. Excludes special education teachers. Teachers were classified as elementary or secondary on the basis of the grades they taught rather than on the level of the school in which they taught.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1987–88, 1990–91, and 1993–94.

Teachers' average class size, by control of school and teacher level: School years 1987–88, 1990–91 and 1993–94

Control of school and teacher level	1987–88	1990–91	1993–94
Public			
Elementary	24.5	24.1	24.1
Secondary	23.9	22.6	23.6
Private			
Elementary	21.3	20.5	21.7
Secondary	20.4	19.1	19.1

NOTE: In this analysis, "elementary" teachers are those who taught self-contained classes at the elementary level, and "secondary" teachers are those who taught departmentalized classes (e.g., science, art, social science, or other course subjects) at the secondary level. Excludes special education teachers. Teachers were classified as elementary or secondary on the basis of the grades they taught, rather than on the level of the school in which they taught.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1987–88, 1990–91, and 1993–94.

Teachers' average class size, by control of school, teacher level, and selected school characteristics: School year 1993–94

Selected school characteristics	Public		Private	
	Elementary	Secondary	Elementary	Secondary
Total	24.1	23.6	21.7	19.1
Urbanicity				
Central city	24.7	25.0	22.2	19.9
Urban fringe/large town	25.1	24.5	21.9	19.8
Rural/small town	22.9	22.1	20.4	15.6
Percentage of minority students enrolled				
Less than 20 percent	23.6	22.8	20.9	18.8
20 percent or more	24.5	24.3	22.6	19.9
Percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch				
0–5	24.2	23.7	—	—
6–20	24.5	23.5	—	—
21–40	24.1	23.5	—	—
41 or more	23.8	23.6	—	—
School size				
Less than 150	18.1	15.2	17.0	10.7
150–499	23.0	20.7	23.1	18.7
500–749	24.9	23.4	25.1	21.1
750 or more	26.1	24.9	23.3	22.6

— Not applicable.

NOTE: In this analysis, "elementary" teachers are those who taught self-contained classes at the elementary level, and "secondary" teachers are those who taught departmentalized classes (e.g., science, art, social science, or other course subjects) at the secondary level. Excludes special education teachers. Teachers were classified as elementary or secondary on the basis of the grades they taught, rather than on the level of the school in which they taught.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993–94.

Table 39-1 Percentage of teachers who team taught, by control of school: School years 1987-88, 1990-91, and 1993-94

Control of school	1987-88	1990-91	1993-94
Public	4.6	5.9	7.1
Private	4.2	5.3	4.9

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1987-88, 1990-91, and 1993-94.

Table 39-2 Public school teachers' average class size, by teacher level and state:
School year 1993-94

State	Elementary	Secondary
Total	24.1	23.6
Alabama	21.7	24.2
Alaska	22.6	22.0
Arizona	25.8	25.5
Arkansas	21.0	21.3
California	29.3	29.7
Colorado	24.7	24.5
Connecticut	21.4	19.7
Delaware	24.8	24.1
District of Columbia	21.8	20.7
Florida	26.0	26.6
Georgia	22.2	24.2
Hawaii	23.6	23.6
Idaho	24.0	23.7
Illinois	24.5	24.0
Indiana	21.9	23.0
Iowa	22.5	21.4
Kansas	20.6	20.7
Kentucky	24.4	23.5
Louisiana	22.9	23.7
Maine	21.5	18.5
Maryland	26.3	25.0
Massachusetts	23.1	20.9
Michigan	27.3	25.5
Minnesota	24.5	25.9
Mississippi	23.6	22.5
Missouri	23.7	22.5
Montana	21.2	19.3
Nebraska	20.0	18.7
Nevada	24.4	26.6
New Hampshire	21.8	20.5
New Jersey	23.2	20.5
New Mexico	21.9	24.5
New York	23.9	23.2
North Carolina	24.8	22.4
North Dakota	20.7	19.7
Ohio	25.0	22.3
Oklahoma	20.5	20.5
Oregon	24.4	23.9
Pennsylvania	25.2	24.1
Rhode Island	23.2	20.8
South Carolina	23.3	22.5
South Dakota	19.2	20.9
Tennessee	24.4	25.2
Texas	20.1	22.5
Utah	27.5	28.8
Vermont	19.7	19.2
Virginia	22.6	21.6
Washington	25.9	25.5
West Virginia	20.9	22.5
Wisconsin	23.1	23.1
Wyoming	21.0	19.3

NOTE: In this analysis, "elementary" teachers are those who taught self-contained classes at the elementary level and "secondary" teachers are those who taught departmentalized classes (e.g., science, art, social science, or other course subjects) at the secondary level. Excludes special education teachers. Teachers were classified as elementary or secondary on the basis of the grades they taught, rather than on the level of the school in which they taught.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993-94.

Table S39(a) Standard errors for the first text table in *Indicator 39*

Control and level of school	1987–88	1990–91	1993–94
Public			
Elementary	0.1	0.1	0.1
Secondary	0.1	0.1	0.1
Private			
Elementary	0.3	0.2	0.2
Secondary	0.5	0.3	0.2

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1987–88, 1990–91, and 1993–94.

Table S39(b) Standard errors for the second text table in Indicator 39

Selected school characteristics	Public		Private	
	Elementary	Secondary	Elementary	Secondary
Total	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2
Urbanicity				
Central city	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.2
Urban fringe/large town	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.3
Rural/small town	0.2	0.1	0.7	0.7
Percentage of minority students enrolled				
Less than 20 percent	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.3
20 percent or more	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.3
Percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch				
0–5	0.3	0.2	—	—
6–20	0.4	0.1	—	—
21–40	0.4	0.1	—	—
41 or more	0.2	0.2	—	—
School size				
Less than 150	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.9
150–499	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.3
500–749	0.2	0.2	1.0	0.3
750 or more	0.3	0.1	0.9	0.3

— Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993–94.

Table S39-1 Standard errors for table 39-1

Control of school	1987-88	1990-91	1993-94
Public	0.1	0.2	0.2
Private	0.3	0.4	0.3

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1987-88, 1990-91, and 1993-94.

Table S39-2 Standard errors for table 39-2

State	Elementary	Secondary
Total	0.1	0.1
Alabama	0.4	0.2
Alaska	0.5	0.5
Arizona	0.4	0.3
Arkansas	0.4	0.3
California	0.3	0.4
Colorado	0.3	0.4
Connecticut	0.2	0.2
Delaware	0.4	0.4
District of Columbia	0.3	0.6
Florida	0.3	0.4
Georgia	0.2	0.3
Hawaii	0.3	0.8
Idaho	0.5	0.4
Illinois	0.3	0.3
Indiana	0.4	0.3
Iowa	0.6	0.5
Kansas	0.3	0.4
Kentucky	0.9	0.4
Louisiana	0.3	0.3
Maine	1.1	0.4
Maryland	0.7	0.3
Massachusetts	0.4	0.3
Michigan	1.9	0.3
Minnesota	1.0	0.4
Mississippi	0.4	0.4
Missouri	0.5	0.4
Montana	0.8	0.4
Nebraska	0.8	0.4
Nevada	0.7	0.6
New Hampshire	0.4	0.4
New Jersey	0.8	0.4
New Mexico	0.3	0.4
New York	0.4	0.4
North Carolina	0.2	0.3
North Dakota	0.7	0.5
Ohio	1.2	0.4
Oklahoma	0.4	0.3
Oregon	0.3	0.4
Pennsylvania	0.6	0.3
Rhode Island	0.6	0.5
South Carolina	0.7	0.4
South Dakota	0.3	0.4
Tennessee	1.2	0.4
Texas	0.2	0.4
Utah	0.4	0.2
Vermont	0.8	0.4
Virginia	0.3	0.3
Washington	1.3	0.2
West Virginia	0.5	0.3
Wisconsin	0.4	0.4
Wyoming	0.3	0.3

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey, 1993–94.